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Soviet and East European General Purpose Forces

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

4 December 1969

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Soviets probably will continue to press for the use of shore facilities such as those made available by the UAR and Syria. We continue to believe that with their present resources the Soviets can support only limited surface naval operations on the high seas for extended periods of time, or larger operations for a few weeks. Without overseas naval shore support facilities any major increase in long-range surface operations would require augmentation of existing auxiliary forces, not only with oilers and cargo ships from the merchant fleet, but also with ships designed to provide specialized technical support to naval forces at sea.

Capabilities for Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological Warfare

85. *Weapons.* We believe that nuclear weapons have been allocated to the general purpose naval forces. Nuclear weapons in a variety of types and yields are available for delivery by air- and surface-launched cruise missiles and probably a small number of torpedoes and depth bombs. Soviet naval cruise missiles could carry chemical warheads. The most likely candidates for such warheads are those cruise missiles used by naval coastal defense units. Chemical shells for naval guns mounted on destroyers and cruisers are probably also available; such shells are stored in port and placed on ships only during major exercises or in wartime.

86. *Defense.* The Soviets continue to construct ships with water washdown systems, hermetically sealed compartments, filtered ventilation systems, and decontamination stations that would enable those ships to carry out their assigned missions in a toxic chemical, biological, or radiological (CBR) environment. Extensive training is provided for the maintenance of a permanent, high level of CBR readiness for the various naval units.

VI. AIRLIFT AND SEALIFT

Airlift and Air Assault Capabilities

87. The Soviets continue to add to their military air transport capabilities. There are now as many as 975 medium transports assigned to military transport units, of which about 800 are AN-12 Cubs. Some 725-750 of the latter provide the main intertheater lift for theater forces and have as a main mission the support of airborne troops. These could lift assault elements of two airborne divisions for airdrop to a radius of about 950 n.m. Some Cubs have improved range and weight-carrying capabilities; 350 of these could lift about 5,000 paratroops with supporting equipment to a radius of about 1,500 n.m., or a maximum range of 2,800 n.m. In an emergency, this lift capability could be augmented by other military transport and by medium- and long-range aircraft in the Soviet Civil Air Fleet.

88. The range and payload limitations of the AN-12 underscore the importance of the new AN-22 heavy transport, which can carry nearly 100,000 pounds of cargo or 175 troops to a radius of some 2,800 n.m. or a range of 5,100 n.m. The